

[3 August, 2001]

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movement of agro produce throughout the country which would immensely help the farming community?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) and (b) In March, 1993, the Central Government decided to treat the entire country as a single food zone for inter-State and intra-State movement of foodgrains and advised the State/Union Territory Administrations to take action accordingly. Most of the States have removed restrictions imposed on movement of foodgrains through Control Orders issued under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. However, a few States, such as, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Jammu & Kashmir still have some restrictions on movement of foodgrains.

(c) The issue of removal of all restrictions on movement of agricultural produce including foodgrains has been referred to the Standing Committee of Union Ministers and Chief Ministers on Food Management and Agricultural Produce constituted in the Conference of Chief Ministers held on 21st May, 2001.

Pharmaceutical Policy

1408. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

- (a) when Government are going to bring before Parliament the Pharmaceutical Policy, 2001;
- (b) whether it is a fact that one of the proposals is to give full exemption in I.T. for royalty receipts;
- (c) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (d) what steps the Ministry is taking on the quality front?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) to (d) A Committee, namely, the Drug Price Control Review Committee was set up to review, the present price

control mechanism with a view to reducing the rigours of price control, where they had become counter productive. Another Committee, the Pharmaceutical Research & Development Committee was set up to recommend measures to strengthen the research & development capability of the Pharmaceutical Industry in the country and identify the support required by Indian Pharmaceutical companies to undertake domestic R&D. Both the Committees have since submitted their reports suggesting measures in that direction. Changes in the Pharmaceutical Policy will take into consideration all relevant factors including the recommendations of the Committees.

Gratuity and PF arrears in SSPL and BIL

1409. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether gratuity and PF dues have not been paid to some retired employees of SSPL and BIL;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether some employees are due for premature retirement because of change of retirement age from 60 to 58;
- (d) if so, whether adequate financial provisions are available to pay their dues, alongwith those referred to in part(a) above; and
- (e) if not, the reasons for forcing retirement without making arrangement for payment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e) 16 retired employees in SSPL and 71 in BIL have not been paid their gratuity. In BIL, 100 retired employees have not been paid their PF dues. The age of superannuation of the employees of BIL and SSPL has been rolled back from 60 years to 58 years. These companies due to their poor internal generation of funds have not been above to make payments towards terminal benefits even to some of those employees who are retiring/have-retired at the age of 60 years.